

REMARKS

I. Amendment

Reconsideration of the rejections in the Application is respectfully requested. Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 27, 29, 31-33, 35-40, 44, 48-52, 54, 56-64, 67, and 71-76 will be pending. Claims 27, 29, 31-33, 35-40, 44, 48-54, 56-64, 67, and 71-76 stand rejected. Claims 27, 52, 75 and 76 are amended.

Applicant respectfully requests entry of the above amendment and submits that the amendment does not introduce new matter. Support for the amendment to the claims and for the new claims can be found throughout the specification (considered as a whole) and in the claims as originally filed. In particular, support for the amendment to claims 27 and 52 can be found, *inter alia*, in the specification at page 9, lines 20-23 and page 10, lines 31-34 and in the claims as originally filed. Support for the amendment to claims new claims 75 and 76 can be found, *inter alia*, in the specification at page 9, lines 24-25 and Figure 1.

Based on the above amendments and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 1

Claims 27, 29, 31-33, 35-40, 44, 48-54, 56-64, 67, and 71-76 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. *See* Office Action, p. 2. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

The Office Action first stated that the limitation “wherein the crosslinking comprises the use of” methylene bis-acrylamide in claims 27 and 52 is not supported by the specification. *See id.* The Office Action asserted that the crosslinking reaction occurs between polyacrylamide and methylene bis-acrylamide only; thus, the new language entails new matter. *See id.* The Office Action then asserted that claims 75 and 76 also contain new matter because they claim the polymer gel “further comprises” the molecular formula. *See* Office Action, p. 3. The Office Action stated that the polymer gel has the formula but does not “further comprise” the formula. *See id.*

Initially, Applicant respectfully points out that claim 53 has been canceled; thus, any reference to claim 53 is assumed to be a typographical error. Applicant also maintains that the

crosslinking may comprise other elements in addition to the use of methylene bis-acrylamide. However, in the interest of advancing prosecution, claims 27 and 52 have been amended to read, *inter alia*, “wherein the crosslinking consists essentially of the use of methylene bis-acrylamide.” Applicant respectfully submits that, as amended, the claim limits the use of only polyacrylamide and methylene bis-acrylamide but does not limit the products of the reaction and any side reactions that may result. Finally, claims 75 and 76 have also been amended to read, *inter alia*, “wherein the polymer hydrogel consists essentially of the formula.” Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of 27, 29, 31-33, 35-40, 44, 48-52, 54, 56-64, 67, and 71-76 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

For at least the reasons stated above, claims 27, 29, 31-33, 35-40, 44, 48-52, 54, 56-64, 67, and 71-76 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Application be allowed and passed to issue.

In the event any outstanding issues remain, Applicant would appreciate the courtesy of a telephone call to Applicant's undersigned representative to resolve such issues in an expeditious manner.

Respectfully submitted,

HUNTON & WILLIAMS LLP

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By:



Robin L. Teskin
Registration No. 35,030

Victoria A. Silcott
Registration No. 57,443

Hunton & Williams LLP
Intellectual Property Department
1900 K Street, N.W.
Suite 1200
Washington, D.C. 20006-1109
Ph. (202) 955-1500
Fax (202) 778-2201